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UNCLAS 6T

Venezuela: Government F-16's Overfly Valencia Rebel Stronghold

PA0402155492 Paris AFP in Spanish 1535 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Text] Valencia, Venezuela, 4 Feb (AFP) -- According to reports from newsmen in the area, as of 1515 GMT, F-16 fighter jets were flying over Valencia, 100 km west of Caracas, which is in the hands of military rebels.

The rebels, who launched a coup d'etat on 4 February, reportedly established their base of operations in Valencia, where they occupied Armed Forces bases and are holding several generals hostage, according to newsmen.

The privately owned Radio Caracas Television station showed pictures of the F-16's overflying Valencia to intimidate the rebels.

The airplanes could launch an attack.

Governor Enrique Salas Romer called on the people to remain in their homes. The few civilians who came out into the streets during the morning hurriedly returned home when the F-16's began flying overhead.

A Radio Caracas Television newsman who entered the rebel base found that young students from the University of Carabobo who support the coupists were at the base and were traveling around the city with the rebel soldiers.

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P.GOV - Coup Attempt
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